

the eating away of the case. Furthermore, if the case be watertight, the presence of this possibly largely fluid mass may be advantageous to the spermatozoa, especially if their sojourn in the spermatophore be long. Its function may be to keep the sperm moist and active. This is, however, mere supposition, and so little is known about the processes of fertilisation in the Oligochaeta that no safe guess can be hazarded. But it seems clear from the large mass of granular substance that it plays some important function in fertilisation.

22. A Rare Beaked Whale.

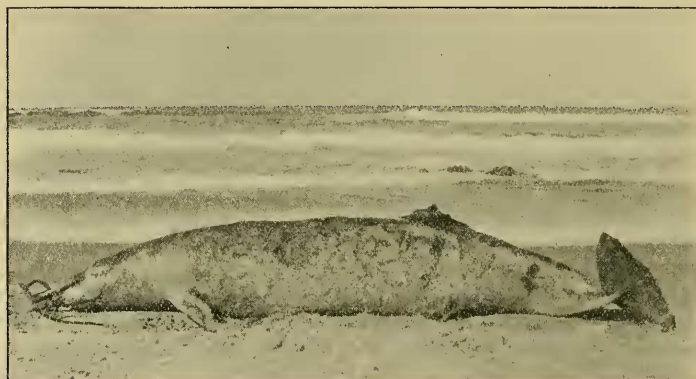
By R. LYDEKKER.

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(Text-figures 137-139.)

Some months ago—I believe early in the present year—a Beaked Whale was stranded on the beach near Port Elizabeth, which fortunately came under the notice of Mr. F. W. FitzSimons, the Director of the Museum in that city. Photographs were taken of the specimen as it lay, and the skeleton was subsequently cleaned and placed on exhibition in the Museum. As it lay, the specimen measured $15\frac{1}{2}$ feet in length, from the tip of the muzzle to the end

Text-fig. 137.



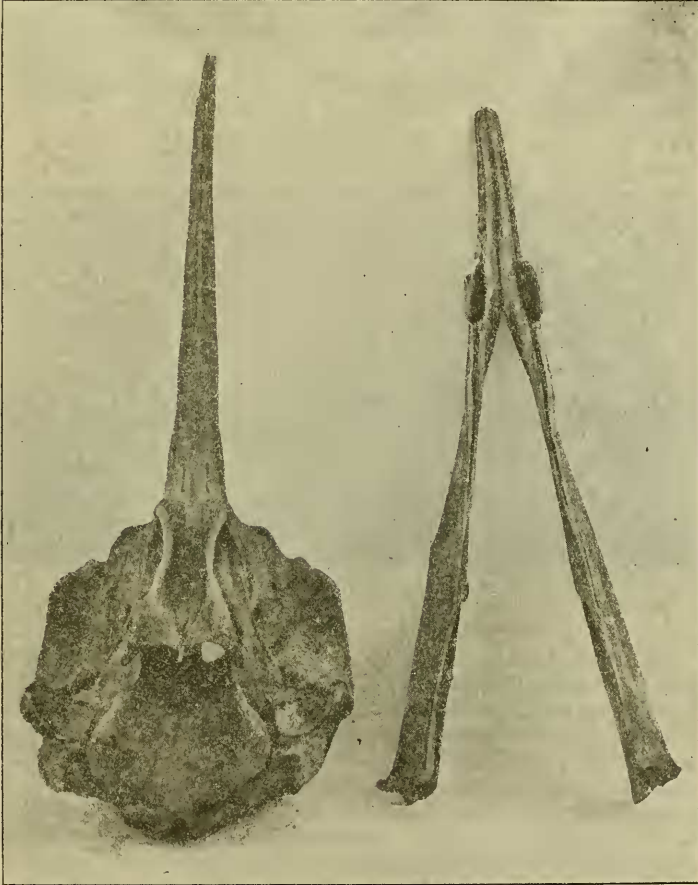
Mesoplodon (Dioplodon) grayi as it lay on the beach.

The back-fin had been hacked by natives.

of the flukes. In colour it was jet-black all over; and the flukes was remarkable on account of the posterior border being convex, instead of deeply emarginate, as in ordinary cetaceans. The skull, of which Mr. FitzSimons forwarded the two photographs herewith reproduced, indicates that the specimen is referable to the genus *Mesoplodon* (as commonly understood); this being manifest from

the presence of the single pair of large teeth just behind the hind end of the symphysis of the lower jaw. These teeth are, however, quite different in shape from those of Sowerby's Beaked Whale (*M. bidens*)—a species unknown in the Southern Seas; and the whole jaw is likewise different, as Mr. FitzSimons has pointed out, from

Text-fig. 138.



Palatal aspects of cranium and lower jaw of *Mesoplodon (Dioplodon) grayi*.

that of the South African Blainville's Beaked Whale (*M. densirostris*), in which the form of the teeth is also distinct. On the other hand, in the great size of their basal portion and the upright position of the terminal cap, the teeth agree exactly with those of

the imperfect skull from New Zealand described and figured by Sir William Flower, in the 'Transactions of the Zoological Society,' vol. x, p. 421, pl. lxxii. fig. 3, 1878, as a new species, under the name of *Mesoplodon haasti*. That so-called species has, however, been identified by Dr. H. O. Forbes, in the Society's 'Proceedings' for 1893, p. 218, with the New Zealand species previously named *M. grayi*, of which it represents a very old individual, the functionless small upper teeth found in younger specimens having been lost. Assuming this identification to be correct, which I think is probably the case, the Port Elizabeth whale would appear to be also a fully adult specimen of *Mesoplodon grayi*, and therefore of great interest as showing the extension of the range of the species to South Africa.

Text-fig. 139.

Lateral view of skull of *Mesoplodon (Dioplodon) grayi*.

But this is not all, for while, as already mentioned, the Port Elizabeth Beaked Whale has the hind margin of the tail-fin convex, in Sowerby's Beaked Whale it is deeply emarginate, as is well shown in De Blainville's figure reproduced on page 255 of the 'Study of Mammals.' A feature similar to that found in the tail of the Port Elizabeth specimen is stated to occur in a Beaked Whale from Annisquam, Massachusetts, which Dr. F. W. True (Bull. U.S. National Museum, no. 73, p. 10, 1910) refers to *M. densirostris*, a near relative of *M. grayi* (with which *M. australis* is identical); and it therefore seems that these two species form, at least, a distinct sub-generic group, for which the name *Dioplodon* is available.

I may add that I am indebted to my friend Mr. G. A. Boulenger for handing me the original communication from Mr. FitzSimons.